DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 411 880 JC 970 464

AUTHOR	Beaupre, Charles
TITLE	Lifelong Learning in a Developed and a Developing Economy.
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	14p.; In: Lifelong Learning: Policies, Practices, and Programs; see JC 970 458.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Comparative Analysis; Confucianism; Continuing Education; Cross Cultural Studies; *Cultural Influences; *Economic Factors; *Educational Development; Educational History; *Educational Philosophy; Foreign Countries; *Lifelong Learning; Political Influences; Postsecondary Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Taiwan (Taipei); *Vietnam

ABSTRACT

Comparing the evolution of lifelong learning in Chinese Taipei and Vietnam, this paper describes cultural, political, and economic factors influencing approaches and attitudes towards the lifelong learning movement and makes projections for the future. Following a description of sources used, including informal interviews with 50 adult learners in Hanoi and 50 in Taipei, the evolution of lifelong learning in Chinese Taipei is discussed. This section outlines the movement of lifelong learning from an original mixture of political doctrine and Confucian humanism to the present mixture of private sector development programs and social education programs. Projections for the future of education in Chinese Taipei are then made, highlighting the effects of democratization, labor market needs, and the importance of education in Confucian morality. The evolution of lifelong learning in Vietnam is then discussed, reviewing the country's past attempts to eliminate illiteracy, increase the levels of schooling, and improve the working skills of the population. Present efforts to establish a complementary educational system with a curriculum ranging from the consolidation of reading and writing skills to preparation for post-secondary studies are then described, and projections for the future of lifelong learning in Vietnam are presented. Finally, differences between the two countries' social, political, and economic development are reviewed and the common thread of the Confucian learning ethic is discussed. Contains 19 references. (TGI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 411 880

Lifelong Learning in a Developed and a Developing Economy

Charles Beaupre

In: Lifelong Learning: Policies, Practices, and Programs

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. J. Hatton

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

JC 970 464

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Lifelong Learning in a Developed and a Developing Economy

by Charles Beaupré

Lifelong learning, and the ideologies and foundations on which it rests, are strongly influenced by culture, as well as political and economic developments. This paper, by comparing the evolution of lifelong learning in Chinese Taipei and Vietnam, describes factors in the cultural, political and economic makeup that are influencing approaches and attitudes towards lifelong learning. For example, in Chinese Taipei the combination of political ideology and Confucian principles has meshed with the powerful economic development of the past twenty-five years to create a strong and well developed platform for lifelong learning. Vietnam, on the other hand, is focusing by necessity on its ongoing transformation from a centralized agrarian-based economy to a market driven system. Educational policies and practices, including those that support the lifelong learning context, are quite naturally influenced by this. Irrespective of the developing and developed economy distinction, there is an important philosophical predisposition towards learning in general that lends popular support for lifelong learning.

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines lifelong learning phenomena in Chinese Taipei and Vietnam.[1] Presented as a cross-cultural comparative analysis, the paper considers past and present lifelong learning issues in both economies, and makes projections for the future. In addition to reviewing a range of secondary sources, the paper includes data collected from informal, on-site interviews conducted in Taipei and Hanoi. In both instances, 50 subjects were purposefully chosen from a representative cross section of adult learners participating in secondary-level supplementary education programs. In Chinese Taipei the group of adult learners was attending English language classes at a Municipal Cultural Center in Yong-ho, a suburb of Taipei. In Vietnam the adult learners were attending a language arts class in the evening at a high school located in the Tran Xuan Soan district. All interviewees were middle-aged and older. In Chinese Taipei 27 men and 23 women were interviewed. All of

[1]Vietnam is not a member of APEC. However, it has applied for membership and the majority of its international trade is with APEC members. The value of this paper, from APEC and Asia Pacific perspectives, rests in large part on the "more developed" vs "less developed" economy comparison.

these respondents were high school graduates and several had attended college. In Vietnam 21 men and 29 women were interviewed. Of these, only 16 had finished a secondary level education. The paper concludes by identifying developments in both these economies that are broadly instructive for lifelong learning educators and policy makers in all Asia Pacific economies. It identifies a philosophical predisposition, embodied in Confucian ethics, that overcomes at least some economic barriers (or lack of administrative initiative) in pursuing lifelong learning interests. The implications of a greying population are considered within the context of older adults acting as key educational resources in Chinese Taipei.

CHINESE TAIPEI

In the earlier part of this century, Sun Yat-sen, a principal figure in turn-of-the-century Chinese history, expounded his views on education. Essentially, these were comprised of his political philosophy, merged with basic Confucian virtues, and formulated as the Three Principles of the People (*San Min Chu I*): People's Rule (nationalism), People's Authority (democracy), and People's Livelihood (sometimes described as socialism) (see Meyer, 1988). At the time they were presented, Sun's principles of education were meant to apply quite broadly; however, various struggles intervened, and this was not to be. These principles have, however, influenced education policies in Chinese Taipei, and an acknowledgement of them supports a better appreciation of the overall social and educational developmental context.

Lifelong Learning – Recent Past

Earlier in this century, as Chinese Taipei's educational system was being established, Chiang Kai-shek and others elaborated on Sun Yat-sen ideological principles, adapting them to developing doctrines. In 1953, Chiang published his political views on education in *Supplementary Statements on Education and Recreation and the Principle of Livelihood*. This became a source for guiding principles or the *raison d'être* influencing much of the educational philosophy and structure in Chinese Taipei. According to Chiang, the people of Chinese Taipei should observe basic virtues of loyalty, filiai piety and righteousness in order to become citizens "who love [Chinese Taipei] more than their own lives" (Chiang, 1959, p.276). Thus, the spirit of education, including education for adults, came to be enveloped in loyalty. During the 1950s, and for various reasons, Chinese Taipei policy makers worked hard to present the economy as a principal conservator of Chinese civilization. Educational authorities responded to Chiang's directive of promoting 'cultural fidelity' by merging broad ideologies with traditional Chinese values, that is, those embodied in Confucianism (Lucas, 1982; Meyer, 1988; Taylor, 1988)[2].

Thus, in terms of ideology, education in Chinese Taipei came to feature a mixture of political doctrine and Confucian humanism. Given the conservative outlook of

[2]Essentially, Confucianism is a moral system that fosters a universal 'inner-world morality' (Hall & Ames, 1987). At the heart of Confucianism is the notion of *ren*, or love, human kindness, and virtue. Of all the Confucian virtues, filial piety has been traditionally regarded as the most outstanding manifestation of *ren*. According to Confucius, filial piety serves as the fundamental ethical principle guiding the *five traditional relationships*: that between father and son, elder and younger siblings, husband and wife, friend and friend, and ruler and subject (Tan, 1990).

the administration, the interpretation of Confucian morality focused primarily on the maintenance of social order. In everyday terms this was achieved through the expansion of the individual's social duty, beginning with the family, extending to the community, and culminating in the society as a whole. Given the orthodox interpretation of this Confucian social doctrine, more liberal interpretations of the role of education were largely ignored.

Following the guidelines set by the central authorities, the task of establishing a national curriculum for all educational programs in Chinese Taipei was given to the Ministry of Education (MOE). The MOE in turn created the departments of elementary education, secondary education, higher education, physical education, technological and vocational education, social education, and general affairs.[3] Depending on their nature, lifelong learning activities fell either under supplementary vocational education or under the rubric of social education. During the ensuing decades lifelong learning remained relegated to the functional vocational track or to (traditional) socio-cultural activities. This basic division continues to this day.

Lifelong Learning – Present

Typically, vocational training is offered through public and private vocational schools, focusing on seven major areas: agricultural, industrial, commercial, opera and arts, home economics, health and nursing, and marine products (Ministry of Education, 1990). However, these conventional schools do not easily integrate teaching methods and techniques that draw upon workers' previous experiences, thereby limiting the transfer of knowledge from one working situation to another. For older adult learners, this has been a major impediment in linking concepts and practices taught in a vocational class with their own professional abilities. In response to this shortcoming in the public vocational education system, private enterprises have developed more innovative training programs focusing on effective skill recycling of older employees. Many such enterprises have taken seriously the concept of continuous learning, critical thinking, and problem solving as an integral part of in-service training (Pucel & Lyau, 1995; Yuen, 1993). They have come to appreciate the long-term benefits of empowering employees with the concept of continuous improvement. It is important to note, however, that the unemployed and other marginal groups do not have access to these opportunities, a situation typical in most economies, both developed and developing.

As for social education, programs are for the most part designed to raise adult learners' cultural and educational levels. Typical social education programs include Mandarin Language usage (the official language of Chinese Taipei), family education, fine arts, physical education, and vocational skills. Cultural and educational activities are provided in a wide variety of forms such as elementary, secondary and college nonformal and informal programs, social education centres, agricultural extension services, labour organizations, and cultural organizations, such as museums, parks, art galleries, cultural centres and libraries (Epstein, 1988; C. J. Lin, 1983; Ministry of

[3] The formal educational structure emulates the American model, that is, a 6-3-3-4 structure. This includes six years of primary level instruction, three at the junior high school level, three more at the high school level, and four years of university.

Education, R.O.C, 1990). Again, it is worth noting that marginal groups, including the illiterate, have little or no useful access to this programming.

To this day education authorities continue to view social education as a means of cultivating appropriate ideas and behaviour compatible with building a modern economy. Consequently social education remains purposefully integrated with economic development, social reconstruction, and cultural renaissance.

Lifelong Learning – Future

Although the social education system has remained essentially the same for the past four decades, recent socio-political developments are spurring educational officials to make certain adjustments to the program. Ironically, the ideological impetus for many of these changes stems from the thoughts of Sun Yat-sen and Confucius, and both have important implications for the future of lifelong learning in Chinese Taipei.

When we read the *Three Principles of the People*, we discover that it contains many progressive notions, celebrating many contemporary concepts such as international brotherhood, pacifism, human rights, and others. Among these concepts we find that the most progressive ideas are embedded mainly within two of Sun Yat-sen's principles: democracy and the people's livelihood. Interestingly, these two pillars of Sun's ideology can be interpreted as having direct bearing on lifelong learning. First let us examine the principle of participatory democracy.

The process of democratization has greatly transformed the socio-political scene in Chinese Taipei over the past decade. Given the pervasive nature of this process, perhaps it was to be expected that the world of education would be influenced as well, including adult education and perspectives on lifelong learning. These changes were observed in responses to the interviews completed in Taipei. Asked whether they were satisfied with present lifelong learning opportunities, the majority of the respondents (37 out of 50) indicated that the administration should give them better, more comprehensive educational services. Asked for the reasons behind this view, many respondents cited their basic rights as citizens. One respondent phrased it in the following manner, as Chinese Taipei "has become a democracy (*min-chu-hua*), everyone, young and old, should enjoy worthwhile educational activities". Responses of this type suggest that adult education has taken on socio-political dimensions, closely linked with democratic principles.[4] In other words, it would appear that for today's adult learners, the administration has a *duty* to provide quality educational opportunities. This attitude of expectation differs from the past, when adult learners were regarded as passive recipients of education services bestowed by the government. In coming years it is highly probable that the trend for greater administrative accountability with regards to lifelong learning will become more evident.

The other notion, that of livelihood, is clarified as follows: "Education and culture shall aim at the development among the citizens of ... morality, good physique, sci-

[4]Several subjects were quite informed about the promotion of lifelong learning in the international community, making specific references to the concept of lifelong education as promulgated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

entific knowledge, and the ability to earn a living" (quoted in C. J. Lin, 1983, p.112). In view of the rapidly changing professional standards required of today's human resources in Chinese Taipei, many adults are finding themselves unable to earn a living, as they are unqualified to compete in the job market (Yuen, 1993). Although some of their needs are being met by the vocational education system, according to data from the interviews many adult learners under this system feel that the content and teaching methods overemphasize trade training at the expense of a broader context of lifelong learning, one that would address changing personal, psychological, and social situations. A large number, 23, specifically mentioned their right to adequate professional training *framed within a lifelong learning context*.

A third factor, ideologically linked with the socio-political promotion of lifelong learning in Chinese Taipei, is Confucian morality. According to Confucius, the deference accorded one's elders stems mainly from their being learned and wise individuals. From the Confucian viewpoint, the role of "benevolent intellectual" is not taken lightly. In order to live up to this image, most adults adhere to the age-old Confucian maxim that one should study as long as one lives. Given the general acceptance of Confucian attitudes toward the application of learning throughout one's life, many adult lifelong learners are motivated to engage in educational activities from this viewpoint, that is, as a moral responsibility (see Chang, 1990). In this regard the adult subjects interviewed were nearly unanimous; in pursuing lifelong learning they were acting in accordance with the moral precepts of Confucius. Interestingly, many subjects perceived a mutual moral contract between themselves and the government, in the sense that, if they were willing to engage in lifelong learning, the administration has the moral obligation to provide them with satisfactory lifelong learning opportunities.

Public support for the wider socio-cultural implications of lifelong learning has not gone unnoticed by Chinese Taipei's administration. Over the last few years the MOE has increased its subsidies to cultural organizations offering lifelong learning programs to adults (Yuen, 1993). In addition to cultural organizations, the educational media, presented mainly in the form of radio and television programming, has quickly become an important means of promoting lifelong learning. High quality mass media programs, covering a diverse range of topics, such as foreign language courses, culinary skills, meditation and self-healing, workshops, fine arts, physical education, etc., have been well received by lifelong learners (Chang, 1990; H. P. Lin 1995).

This is an encouraging trend, for the learning needs of older adults will become an increasingly urgent concern in Chinese Taipei. As with most industrialized societies, Chinese Taipei's population is aging. The Council for Economic Development Planning (cited in Yang, 1992) has estimated the elderly population age 65 and over will represent 8.7% of the total population by 2011, as compared to 2.4% in 1956, and the administration intends to mobilize much of this vast resource of retired older adults. However, well-planned utilization of this human capital will require a social support system that includes a host of integrated, wide ranging lifelong learning opportunities. More specifically, an increasing number of people over the age of 65 will need practical programs such as occupational guidance and job training as

well as comprehensive socio-cultural enhancement programs to enrich their personal lives. Furthermore, whether on a voluntary basis or as part of an elderly employment program, older members of the society may be used to provide instruction for younger generations. Fortunately, Confucian values have rendered Chinese Taipei psychologically predisposed to make good use of learning models within the lifelong learning paradigm that celebrates older members of the society as valuable transmitters of knowledge and wisdom to younger generations. This is very different from what may be observed in other economies, and western society in particular, and much could be learned from this model by policy makers in a host of APEC economies.

VIETNAM

The Republic of Vietnam, as it exists today, was established in June, 1976. This followed a long period of struggle and conflict, as well as division between north and south. During the French colonial period (1867-1945), Vietnam remained largely underdeveloped and educationally backward. French rule had ensured that only a minority of "loyal" Vietnamese received formal training and education under a system that emphasized individualism and academic specialization. During this era the rate of illiteracy exceeded 90% for those 12 through 50 years of age.

Lifelong Learning – Past

In 1945, when the Viet Minh administration was formed in Hanoi, one of its first major educational policies was to initiate a campaign to eliminate illiteracy. This continued even during periods of conflict, so that by the late 1950s more than 90% of the population under Communist jurisdiction was literate. In 1975, when the economy was reunified, another literacy campaign was launched. By 1978 authorities claimed that the eradication of illiteracy in the adult population of Vietnam had been achieved.

In conjunction with the effort to eliminate illiteracy, Vietnam's leaders felt the need to reform the economy's education system to reflect more closely socialist values as well as inculcate greater political consciousness in the people. They attempted to achieve this by combining study and productive work, theory and practice. These goals translated into educational programs aimed at increasing the levels of schooling and improving the working skills of the population. This effort resulted in the creation of an education and training system divided into four sectors: preschool, general (consisting of a nine-year basic cycle plus a three-year secondary cycle), vocational/technical education, and higher education. The general sector was also given the mandate of administering "complementary education", designed to provide lifelong learning opportunities for adults.

Lifelong Learning – Present

The nonformal complementary education system was created alongside the formal system to provide corresponding education and in-service vocational training for adults on a full- or part-time basis. Complementary education is delivered primarily in the form of post-literacy programs to allow adults to complete their basic or sec-

ondary education. Post-literacy learning materials vary according to whether the delivery takes place in a rural or urban setting. For those learners in rural areas, the materials focus on conventional agricultural training, such as horticulture and animal raising. In urban settings, literacy follow-up materials converge on more contemporary competencies, such as industry- or enterprise-related technical skills, monetary management, or scientific or technological knowledge. Curriculum objectives are grouped according to three levels, ranging from the consolidation of reading and writing skills up to preparation for post-secondary studies. Many curriculum objectives have been specifically designed to meet the needs of young or middle-aged learners. The latter group receives simplified and more practical instruction, the rationale being that these learners are busy with their full-time work.

Although the complementary education system has been praised for its contribution to the attainment of literacy and universalization of first-level education, it may be critiqued for lack of follow-up programs in terms of specific courses, especially in science and technology. As well, the system may favour target groups of elite, male cadres and state employees to the disadvantage of common workers, ethnic members, and women. A third comment, particularly relevant to lifelong learning, is that the system does not easily accommodate target populations above the middle-age range, and teaching methods are inappropriately similar to those utilized in formal educational settings, stressing lectures, drills, testing, and so forth. Finally, complementary education is hampered by financial restrictions, a chronic shortage of materials and instructors, and limited efforts to experiment with novel pedagogical approaches or innovative teaching materials (Le Son, 1986; Nguyen, 1994).

Lifelong Learning – Future

In view of the shortcomings, administrators have introduced corrective measures for complementary education. For example, they are trying to diversify the curriculum so as to meet a broader spectrum of educational needs within the different categories of adult learners. Educational authorities are more willing to accept the assistance of NGO education specialists in order to develop syllabi and pedagogical approaches more suitable for older learners, namely, nonformal and informal educational approaches. Officials have also become more supportive towards the implementation of technological advances in education, including distance education based on audio and video mediums. At the forefront of this latest thrust are the Vietnamese People's Open Universities, presently one in Hanoi and another in Ho Chi Minh City, that produce programming which supports a lifelong learning context. As a result of these efforts, complementary education curricula is becoming richer and more stimulating. This augurs well for the future.

Whatever its shortcomings, complementary education will likely continue to be the main thrust at providing post-literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for the adult population. Programming is becoming more flexible in order to meet the educational needs of a wider range of target groups in terms of age and profession, and governmental efforts to promote lifelong learning seem to have a great deal of support from the adult learners themselves. Informal interviews conducted with adult learners in Hanoi revealed much enthusiasm for lifelong learning, with all respon-

dents stating that lifelong learning is both an obligation and a right. Interestingly, many of them explained their views on lifelong learning in terms of the teachings of Ho Chi Minh and Confucius. For example, several subjects paraphrased Ho Chi Minh: "learning is like a book with no final page", and "learning is as if there were no final rung to a ladder". Others readily referred to Confucius: "Confucius taught us that education is for everyone, it discriminates against no one", and "Confucius insisted that everybody should be given the same opportunity in education".

The juxtaposition of Ho Chi Minh and Confucius is not coincidental if one remembers that Vietnamese culture, including education, was greatly influenced by the Chinese. Evidently, Confucian educational philosophy has had a lasting impact on Vietnam, despite the recess during times of friction. In this sense, typical attitudes among Vietnamese adult learners towards lifelong learning are not unlike those of their Chinese Taipei counterparts. In other words, there appears to be little distinction *in this context* between learners in the developing economy of Vietnam and the more developed economy of Chinese Taipei. One point of distinction, however, is the socio-political perspective on lifelong learning in the two economies. Vietnam has experienced considerable change in the past decade. These reforms have included changes designed to attract more foreign investment, and this process of economic liberalization has led to calls for reform in other spheres, including the educational system (Sloper & Le Thac, 1995). For the most part, however, criticism tends to be expressed by individuals, and there is little public commentary on any educational matters, including those relating to lifelong learning. This was confirmed through interviews in Hanoi where the prevailing attitude of respondents towards lifelong learning issues could be appropriately described as one of acquiescence. In Chinese Taipei, by comparison, respondents had little hesitation in openly expressing opinions.

CONCLUSION

The histories of Chinese Taipei and Vietnam diverge on many fundamental points in terms of social, political, and economic growth. These have important implications for the respective groups of adult lifelong learners. First, demographically, Vietnam's population is far from facing a greying problem. Approximately 40% of the total population is less than twenty years old (Europa World Book, 1995), and so the collective voice of those 65 years of age and over will not be heard as loudly as is the case in Chinese Taipei.

Secondly, the human resource needs of Chinese Taipei reflect a technologically advanced industrialized free-market economic power, while in Vietnam the focus is on reforming an agrarian-based centralized economy towards a market-oriented system. Accordingly lifelong learning concerns in Chinese Taipei, as a model for more developed economies, converge on: (1) providing adequate professional training to older individuals whose skills need to meet post-industrial occupational demands, and (2) providing opportunities for older adult lifelong learners to satisfy their more holistic educational needs, enabling them to become more fulfilled intellectuals. Vietnam, out of necessity, and in the context of the developing economy framework,

concentrates lifelong learning activities on: (1) training a relatively young labour force in technological and industrial fields that support the fledgling market-oriented economy, and (2) providing learning opportunities to older more experienced learners in areas that can guide economic development, such as fiscal management, entrepreneurship, investment, trade, and so forth. In other words, in the developing economy context, there is greater emphasis on vocational and economic training.

Over the last two decades Chinese Taipei's economic performance has earned the respect of the international community. In line with its "economic miracle", Chinese Taipei's political system has undergone a steady process of democratization. Combined, these developments have affected the promotion, implementation and outcomes associated with lifelong learning. The steadily aging population and the redefinition of the elderly within the society has presented challenges and worked to shape the general outlook on lifelong learning. As we approach the next millennium, Chinese Taipei is in the enviable position of having one of the best educated populations in the world, a solid social/vocational education infrastructure to build upon, and a relatively high degree of consensus regarding the desirability of enhancing lifelong learning. All of this suggests that Chinese Taipei may become an international model for lifelong learning, at least with regard to the more developed economy context.

Vietnam, as a developing economy comparison, is faced with tremendous challenges for the delivery of basic and adequate social services, including basic education. The prospects for achieving human and economic potentials associated with lifelong learning are influenced, and perhaps frustrated, to at least some degree, by a vastly different context and stage of economic development. Nonetheless Vietnam does exhibit characteristics that will support the need for and the effective development of lifelong learning, including a vigorous labour force, a strong work/study belief system, a solid basic education system, and an ethic that prizes learning.

Despite great differences in circumstances that affect lifelong learning, it is instructive to note that educational authorities in both Chinese Taipei and Vietnam have the political will to fund research in lifelong learning, addressing such key issues as the memory capacity of adults for learning, the optimum division of time for work, study and lifelong learning activities, and socio-affective factors that influence learning motivation. For Chinese Taipei and Vietnam, this is a clear indication that lifelong learning is becoming a more central concern in both economies.

There are important patterns and issues in these developed and developing economies that are instructive for other Asia Pacific economies. For example, in both economies Confucian tradition serves as an important philosophical predisposition to pursue lifelong learning, especially in non-vocational areas. Although most of the adult learners interviewed hoped for greater governmental support (most notably in Chinese Taipei), many respondents indicated that they had nonetheless previously engaged in self-generated lifelong learning activities, relating mainly to cultural enrichment or foreign language learning. The fact that this response pattern was found in both economies would suggest that there is an underlying Confucian learn-

ing ethic, coming primarily from the people, fostering in them a predisposition that overcomes at least some economic barriers.[5] Some scholars would even argue that the Confucian learning ethic goes beyond mundane moral consideration, that there often is a mystical dimension ascribed to this process—one that ultimately leads to spiritual enlightenment.[6]

It may be reasonable to assume that adult learners living in Asia Pacific economies influenced by a Confucian mental culture can benefit from non-vocational lifelong learning programs that highlight self-study and cultivation of the mind. If anything, adult learners with relatively lower per capita incomes can get more out of lifelong learning syllabi that emphasize self-instruction as an alternative to 'systematized' lifelong learning programs. Such being the case, government educational policy makers should focus on *channeling* the motivational factors behind adult learners' lifelong educational activities rather than preoccupying themselves with *fostering* such a willingness. Moreover, if the cases of Chinese Taipei and Vietnam can be extrapolated, education authorities in many Asia Pacific economies could highlight more readily celebrated national figures, compatible with the Confucian viewpoint, to further champion the cause of popular lifelong learning.

In economies where a pervasive Confucian educational element is absent, namely occidental economies such as the United States and Canada, educational authorities need to give greater thought to the philosophical implications of the spirit of lifelong learning. Perhaps it would be possible to use classical intellectual figures drawn from Western traditions, for instance Plato or Aristotle, as focal points to promulgate more effectively a spirit for lifelong learning.

Finally, it is worth considering the implications of a greying population on economies within the APEC community. The case of Chinese Taipei can serve as an apt illustration of the potential to tap into the vast wealth of human resources found in the 'older adult' section of the population, many of whom can serve as key educational resources providing indispensable cultural knowledge tempered with hands-on experience to younger generations. Naturally, lifelong learning syllabi featuring mature instructors should not view learning activities as unidirectional, rather the learning process should accentuate the bilateral nature of lifelong learning experiences between generations. There are some members of the APEC community who do not have to deal with such demographic issues at this stage of economic development, but as this phenomenon manifests itself most clearly in the more developed economies, it would be sagacious for all policy makers to regard this challenge as inevitable.

[5]It is important to remember that Confucius taught that edification sprang from the will for self-improvement. There are numerous Confucian morality tales that recount how individuals, later to become prominent historical figures, surmounted much adversity in order to educate themselves.

[6]Historically Confucian doctrine often intermixed with other metaphysical interpretations of intellectual maturation, namely Buddhism, connecting the 'spirit' of Confucian learning with the Buddhist pursuit of nirvana (Hall & Ames, 1987).

REFERENCES

Chang, F.T.J. (1990). *A study of technological and vocational education in the Republic of China: Some concepts and their implementation*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Vocational Education and Training Association. Cincinnati, Ohio. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 326 668)

Chiang, K.S. (1959). *National fecundity, social welfare and education*. (Supplements to Sun Yat-sen's Lectures on the Principle of People's Livelihood.) (S.F. Chen, Trans). Taipei, Taiwan: China Publishing.

Epstein, I. (1988). Taiwan. In T.S. Kurian (Ed.), *World Education Encyclopedia*. New York: Facts on File.

Europa world book. (1995). London: Europa Publications.

Hall, D.L., & Ames, R.T. (1987). *Thinking through Confucius*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Le Son (1986). Learning strategies for literacy follow-up and complementary education in the context of lifelong education in Vietnam. In R.H. Dave (Ed.), *Learning strategies for post-literacy and continuing education in China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam*. Hamburg, Germany: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 324 501)

Lin, C.J. (1983). The Republic of China (Taiwan). In R.M. Thomas & T.N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *Schooling in East Asia: Forces of change*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Lin, H.P. (1995). *A new English teaching design for adult Taiwanese learners*. Wisconsin: Department of Educational Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385 119)

Lucas, C.J. (1982). The politics of national development and education in Taiwan. *Comparative Politics, 14*(2), 211-225.

Meyer, J.E. (1988). Moral education in Taiwan. *Comparative Education Review, 32*(1), 20-38.

Ministry of Education, R.O.C. (1990). *Educational statistics of the Republic of China*. Taipei, Taiwan.

Nguyen, D. (1994). *The development of technical and vocational education for Vietnam — A case study for quality improvement*. Melbourne, Australia: Royal Melbourne Institution of Technology. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 391 032)

Pucel, D. & Lyau, N.M. (1995). *An organization's economic return on training investment*. Paper presented at the World Conference of the International Federation of Training and Development Organizations. Sept. 11-14, 1995.

Helsinki, Finland. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 391 003)

Sloper, D. & Le Thac, C. (1995). *Higher education in Vietnam: Change and response*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Tan, T.W. (1990). Some Confucian insight and moral education. *Journal of Moral Education, 19*(1), 33-37.

Taylor, M.J. (1988). Conference Report: Moral education East and West—tradition and innovation. *Moral Education Forum, 13*(2), 4-9.

Vavrek, B. (1995). *Rural and small libraries: Providers of lifelong learning*. Paper presented at the conference Public Libraries and Community-Based Education: Making the Connection for Life Long Learning. Washington, DC: National Institute on Post-secondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385 254)

Yang, J. (1992). The aging: A great potential human resource of Taiwan. *International Review of Education, 38*(4), 427-446.

Yuen, S. (1993). *Vocational education and training plays an important role in Taiwan's economic miracle*. Paper presented at the joint meeting of the International Vocational Education and Training Association and the America Vocational Association. December 4, 1993. Nashville, TN. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 363 795)